hind wings are connected by a transversal building, whereby the inner space is divided into two similar squares, in each of which are situate two wells, wherefrom, in case of fire, the water can be forced into all rooms, even up to the roof. In the middle building is the splendid staircase, flanked by marble columns, the arched ceiling adorned with frescos, representing the allegories of the different arts and sciences. It leads to the middle of the first floor of the hind wing, to the reading rooms, and those where the books for lending are issued. In the midst of the wing on the Ludwig street, the Princes Hall (*Fürstensaal*) attracts our notice. There the busts of those twelve Bavarian sovereigns are placed, who most contributed towards the endowment of this splendid collection. On the ground floor, the general archives of the realm are placed; the first, second, and third stories of the building contain the *seventy-seven* saloons of the library. The moving of this huge collection, comprising 20,000 MSS., and 480,000 printed works, each to be reckoned, at an average, at two volumes, was accomplished in sixty-two days. We may briefly state one of its principal features — which is, the collection of Chinese works collected by Professor Neumann in the East, amounting to several thousands, many unknown in Europe—the *Museum Etruscum Gregorianum*, Romæ, 1842, 2 vols. fol. A new and very praiseworthy arrangement may conclude our sketch—viz., that all *recent* acquisitions, be it of works lately published or of older date; all those presented by either sovereigns or literary and scientific bodies, are exhibited in an especial room, the moment they arrive, and *before* they are arranged, catalogued, bound, &c. &c. Thus the professionals may know what they possess, and what they may select for further use."

Masters and Workmen in France.—The House of Peers are just discussing the system of "*livrets*" (or little books) *for journeymen*. This is—says the *Journal des Débats*, an important progress of our legislation of industry, and a real step made towards the organization of labour and the internal government of the humbler classes. In regulating the relations between master and men, the *livret* surrounds both with the same protection. it guarantees the accomplishment of their reciprocal obligations, it insures the proper order of workshops and, the regularity of work. In some degree, it puts a stop to the abuses of *competition*, by closing to it the illegitimate road of *embauchage*. The first establishing of the *livrets* remounts in France to the later years of the last century, and although the revolution swept away indiscriminately the bad and the good, the *livrets* have been retained in several well-conducted and prospering manufactories. The regulations run as follows: — "Journeymen and apprentices employed in workshops, manufactories, mines, forges, quarries, carpentery, and other works —be it that they work on the establishment, or at home, will be obliged to provide themselves with a *livret*.—When the journeyman enters the place of a master, the latter will inscribe on the book the date of his entry.—And at his leaving his employment, the master shall inscribe the date of his leaving, an acquittal of the engagements the journeyman or apprentice might have entered upon, or the amount of advances which the latter might be indebted to the establishment." It is to be borne in mind, that nothing about the character of the servant is to be entered on these books, which are *not* to be expedients of police.

The Railways of Germany—in winter.—Mr. Negrelli, one of the Austrian employés of the road and bridges department, has started from Vienna for Bohemia, to inspect the damage done by the late snow-storms to some of the railway bridges, &c., and to superintend the repairs. It may be put down as an axiom, that beyond 46° of latitude, no railway can be considered practicable with any degree of certainty on the Continent, during the winter months.

Large increase of Master-paintings to be expected in England.—The celebrated *Hoofman's* collection of pictures at Haarlem has been purchased by a Mr. *Nieuwenhuys*, and will be brought over, at least its best specimens, to this country. The picture gallery of the late Baron Verstalk van Saelen, collected by him through the space of a long life and at much expense, is selling by the heirs, and will also be brought to this country.—*Allg. Zeit.*

Gaining of new Lands in France.—The town council of Marseilles have sanctioned a contract, for exhausting and laying dry the great pond of *Pourra* by means of extensive engines. They have the power of emptying the quantity of 2,200 cubic mètres every minute, and are to be on the spot and ready for action early in April next, the proper period for the beginning the drying up of ponds and bogs.—*Journal des Débats.*

The King of the French—has given a private audience to Mr. *Hommaire de Hill*, one of the travelling commissioners, whom the French Government employs in various parts of the globe, for various scientific and artistical purposes. Mr. H., who is about to start for an extensive expedition into Central Asia, had the honour of presenting to H. M. his work on a former voyage to the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus.

Railways and other Buildings in Portugal.—The overstraining of railway speculation has only damaged its own authors, as wise and prudent people retreated at once, when they saw on what unsafe basis their capital was required. In other respects improvements are going on satisfactorily, as for instance, the road making in the north of Portugal; the streets of Lisbon, are all to be macademized; the new theatre also is a fine building, and an extensive new aqueduct for the capital is projected.

J. L——y.

ILLEGALITY OF OBSTRUCTING ANCIENT LIGHTS BY NEW BUILDINGS.

An action has lately been brought in the Court of Queen's Bench by Sir Frederick Roe, bart., against the Marchioness of Westmeath, for the obstruction of his ancient lights by means of a building raised upon the premises of the defendant on the opposite side of a street in London. Formerly the space so built upon had been a mere wall, but lately the marchioness had erected a conservatory and some other rooms over and above the height of the wall, whereby the light in some four or five of the apartments was materially diminished, so that the inmates were unable to read; the effect was sensibly felt in the diminution of the plaintiff's comfortable enjoyment of the light, and in the exclusion of the beams of the sun, for a considerable period of the summer. A vast number of witnesses, architects and others, were called to prove the case, and various plans, models, and elevations were introduced for the information of the court and of the jury.

The Solicitor-General, for the defendant, assured the jury that the case was without a precedent; that no plaintiff before had ever had the courage to risk an action for obstruction of the light to his windows, in consequence of an alteration in the height of a neighbour's house upon the opposite side of a public street. Such an assumption of right upon the part of owners of houses in this metropolis would, if sanctioned by the decisions of juries, soon put an end to all those improvements by individuals, in respect to their houses, so very general at present, and which so materially contributed to the convenience and beauty of the capital.

Mr. Justice Wightman, in summing up the evidence, said that the question in dispute between the parties was more one of law than of fact. He should therefore submit to them this question only. Whether, in their opinion, there had been a substantial diminution of the comforts of the plaintiff in consequence of the buildings that had been erected by the defendant, taking into consideration the situation of the premises and the purposes to which they had been applied.

The jury, after an absence of half an hour, handed up a written verdict.

Mr. Justice Wightman having read it, said, you are of opinion that the beneficial occupation of the plaintiff has been substantially interfered with, &c.

The foreman replied, that such was their opinion.

Mr. Justice Wightman.—Your verdict, then, will be entered for the plaintiff, subject to the opinion of the court, as to whether the fact of their being a public street between the houses of the plaintiff and the defendant, is not a sufficient answer to the present action.

Nominal damages, 40s.

THE AUST BRIDGE.

Sir,—As you alluded to the proposed suspension bridge over the Severn, at the Aust passage, in the last number of your journal, and have not favoured us with your opinion, perhaps you will allow me to make a few observations on the subject.

Although willing to add my meed of approbation to the magnitude and boldness of the design, I am very much disposed to question its practicability, notwithstanding the sanction seemingly accorded to it by an eminent authority, inasmuch as we have not an instance of the suspension principle having been carried out to any thing like the extent (of span) proposed; nor has it yet, I believe, for obvious reasons, been applied to railway purposes even on a small scale. The largest suspension bridges we have in existence are the Fribourg, in Switzerland, 870 feet span; the Hungerford Foot-bridge, with a central span of 676½ feet, and a total length of suspended roadway of 1,352 feet; the Menai-bridge, with a central span of 550 feet, while the ends are supported on arches of masonry; a circumstance, I think, which deteriorates from the merit of that work. There is also the proposed Clifton-bridge over the Avon, near Bristol, the span of which is to be, when completed, 700 feet.

It is to be regretted, that this bridge company do not exert themselves to complete Brunel's magnificent structure, more particularly as the towers on each side, in their present neglected state, look like monuments erected to commemorate either their pusillanimity or their folly. I have been told that Sir John Guest, bart., has offered to complete the work if the company would mortgage the tolls for a certain period.

The Aust-bridge is intended for the double purpose of railway and general traffic; and this will be attended with great inconvenience, unless a screen is erected to separate the roadways, and sufficient width allowed for each description of traffic; the increased width will, of course, add considerably to the weight to be suspended and supported. I rejoice at the progress the science of engineering is making in the present day, and that magnificent works are daily springing up into maturity and perfection as it were by the magic wand of the engineer, and throwing new lights on the arts of construction, and the better distribution and economy of material; but I hope, the universal success that has hitherto attended our efforts in the development and successful completion of our public and private works, will not induce us rashly to embark in enterprises that have not received the sanction of venerated experience, or been satisfactorily proved to be capable of construction by a series of undoubted experiments. With practical science, as with every other puny effort of man, there is a limit, "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." I fear in this instance the projectors have over-estimated their own abilities, and the tensile powers of the material they propose to employ. I have thrown out these hints for the consideration of the public and the projectors, and trust they will be considered worthy of a place in your journal.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
B. B.
Merthyr Tydfil, S.W., Feb. 10th, 1846.

The House of the Bonaparte Family.—The town-council of Ajaccio have decided that the house on the Piazza Ramolini, where the emperor was born, should be acquired, after the demise of its present occupant, Dame Letizia. It is to be put in the same condition as it was at the time of Napoleon's birth—to be a monument of gratitude for one of the greatest lawgivers modern Europe ever possessed. It is to become public property, open for visitors the same as other public monuments in France, free of charge.

Caligraphic Black Lead Pencils.—Messrs. Wolff have given us the opportunity of trying some of their caligraphic black lead pencils, and we feel bound to say that we have found them very satisfactory, being free from grit, and keeping a good point.

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* Such of our readers as are interested about libraries and their arrangements, will find a good description of the chief curiosities, &c. in a little work: Ueber die Königl. Hof und Staats— Bibliothek für Besucher derselben. München, 1843, 8vo.

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